

A NOTE ON THE *MICROTIS* IN AUSTRALIA

By ROBERT TALMADGE*

(Plate 9)

The apparent scarcity of Australian records of specimens of the genus *Microtis* A. Adams, is the basis for this short note. Pilsbry, and others have placed this group, between the *Stomatia* and *Gena* in their systematic treatment of the family Stomatellidae. At the present time, too few specimens of shell, or shell and animal in combination, are available to the writer to do other than mention the finding of this genus in Australian waters.

A number of years ago, the writer received a sending of Haliotids from Mr. Tony Marsh, of Rockhampton, Queensland; which included a single example of *Microtis heckliana* Crosse. These had been collected in the Capricorn Group as a population series for a comparative project. The *Microtis* had been included due to the strong similarity to juveniles of certain Haliotids.

As little information appears to be in the records concerning this species, it is hoped that this note will stimulate interest, and that other collectors will watch for and preserve both shell and animals when found. No published records could be found for this genus in Australian waters. To assist, the following information is given:—

Microtis heckliana Crosse, *J. Conchylol* 1871, Noumea, New Caledonia. The subcircular shell is extremely thin and fragile, with the spire almost completely depressed into the dorsal surface. The flatish dorsal surface is in contrast to the well-rounded ventral portion, meeting at an acute angle at the periphery of the whorl. Between the sharply incised suture and the periphery of the shell on the dorsal surface, there are a number of low rounded lamellae that radiate outward from the suture to a series of low rounded nodes. The interior of the shell is silvery nacreous. Due to these low nodes there is a superficial resemblance to juvenile Haliotids, with their closed forams. The coloration of the specimen examined was a dull green-white on the dorsal surface, with rusty maculations at the periphery. Ventrally the colour was light green and white in serrate wavy lines.

This does not match the colour or colour pattern as given by Pilsbry in his *Manual of Conchology*, Vol. XII.

However, one of the features noted in this family, Stomatellidae, has been the varied coloration and colour pattern within a species. Thus, it is probably possible to find specimens of various colours and with a number of combinations of patterns.

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Plate 9.

Microtis heckliana Crosse, Capricorn Group, Queensland, Australia.
Collected by Tony Marsh in 1955. Actual size: Major diameter,
16.50 mm.; minor diameter, 12.00 mm.; height, 5.00 mm.